

Still Learning to Read (Sibberson & Szymusiak, 2003)
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Chapter 1

To help children get through challenging books, we must remember that the students have not been reading long and they may find it difficult. The first step in helping these students is to show them that all readers face challenges. Ask students to interview friends and family members about books that they have read that took them awhile to get into. Knowing that adult readers face the same challenges as themselves will help them in overcoming this challenge. Secondly, ask students to find books they have read in the past and to point out when in the reading that they became “hooked”. The term hooked is to refer to when the students became interested in the book. Many times the students will become bored reading the first twenty five to thirty pages of a book and want to put it down. As a teacher we could tell the students that after page thirty your books become very interesting. By telling students this will help them to get through the first thirty pages and get them hooked in the text. This is how I would help children through challenging books.

Chapter 2

The strengths of the classroom described in this chapter are: Books are organized by genre. Nonfiction books are organized by topic. Many titles are displayed face out. Rotating displays appear in each section. Staff picks/Oprah book club books/ New York bestseller lists are featured. Many titles by the same author are organized within a genre. New books are displayed in the same area. Popular books are easy to reach. Books that face out are displayed between several titles arranged with the spine out. Some titles may be found in two or three different places in the library. In my field experience I have saw teachers classrooms set up in the same fashion of the text. First the teacher would decide what she was wanting the students to learn. This helped the teacher to organize what she put out on display. Their classroom had books in baskets to attract students, they had books by the students favorite authors, nonfiction books, award winning books, and books that all the students liked in basket by themselves. The teacher also had books that were categorized by favorite character. Another way to challenge the students was to read topic series, so there was a basket for this. What I didn't see a lot of was reading newspaper articles and reading on the internet. The text book also encourages teachers to put out baskets that are empty and unlabeled. After the teacher gets to know her students she can fill the baskets by what the students like.

Chapter 3

When setting up a classroom for reading, some of the most important things to do is make the best use of our classroom space and to use our wall space. By making the most of our space we need to envision how we want our classroom and do it. Setting priorities is a must. The books states that instead of putting the desks where you want them first, you should plan where you want the learning spaces. You can always put the desks around these spaces. There are four priorities in making the most of our space. First, the classroom library needs to be organized in a way that makes sense for the children. Second, there should be room for a meeting space large enough for the entire class, and this space must include an easel, an overhead, and individual tools such as clipboards and dry-erase boards. Third, there must be prominent space for other subject areas. Fourth, there should be comfortable spaces around the room for various size groups to meet. Using wall space will be the children's first impression of the year they will spend together. Some of the different charts that will go on the wall will be filled out by students later in the year, but the text book tells us not to leave the walls blank. We can put up charts of ways into books to begin conversations about books, charts showing book characters so it may interest the students to read about them, poetry charts can be of a fun poem enlarged on the wall to show students that poetry is fun, and charts of invitation into books and word play charts. These two charts are also displayed of fun books and words that will interest the students.

Chapter 4

If I were a student in Franki's class I would be excited. The teachers are asking the students questions about how they read books and which books they like or dislike. As a student I would feel important that my teacher cared about what books I liked or disliked. Also, as Franki's class read their own books they would share with the class what struggles they were having with reading them. If someone was having trouble knowing all the characters in her book and I was also, we could talk about ways that we could help each other in learning. As students this would show them how to reflect on their reading lives.

Chapter 5

Ways to group children in the middle grades are whole group instruction, individual conference, small groups, and continued observations. Before a teacher puts students into groups, the teacher needs to talk with the student about what they like or dislike and how they view reading. Teachers use to group students on test scores and later found out that this isn't the best way to group students. Whole group instruction deals with students who may have the same problems. Students that may need to develop the same skills. Small group instruction is based on the same principle as whole group but is containing only two to four students. When students needs are not being met by group work we move towards individual instruction. We find out what the students like and try to implement books based on this knowledge. When students are in individual instruction, as a teacher it is important to watch how that child works in whole class instruction. Improvement should become evident here. All of the groups that the students will be in may change because of different books being read. Students like different books and can read some books easier than others. As a teacher, implement the group settings , know what each student likes or dislikes, and help each student according their needs.

Chapter 6

A teacher can turn read aloud time into focused chat by giving the students ideas to think about. Franki would listen to the student read out loud and keep track of some of the questions that they had and before they read the next day she would write sentences from the book on the board. These sentences would be some of the more powerful phrases from the book. These phrases were meant to help students begin there talk during read aloud. During read aloud, writing serves as a major component in helping the students understand the text and help them stay hooked. While the students are reading they may want to write down critical information such as which character is who, or they may write down what they thought was important on a certain page. After the have read during read aloud they will write a paragraph about what they have read. Looking back at their notes that they wrote while they read will help them with writing their paragraphs. This is how teachers can turn read aloud time into focused chat and writing.

Chapter 7

The best of the ideas for helping children to make wise choices regarding book selection is to stay involved with the students all year long. Chapter 7 talks about book choice conversations all year long. Because book choice is individual and constantly changing, it should be discussed during the year. I agree with allowing the students to choose their own books, however, as teachers we must give the students good choices. If students won't read poetry, make poetry cards. Poetry cards are used to help children know what poems to read. On a card a student will read part of a poem and on the back of the card it will say, "if you liked this poem you may want to read..." This will help students in choosing their poems to read. Also to highlight a certain author or genre, a teacher can include a check it out circle. In this circle students will be given a short amount of time to preview a book and then they have to pass it to the person sitting next to them. This allows the students to see different types of books and to get an idea of what they want to read during independent reading time. In demonstrating

choice and reflection, I like how Franki modeled to her students what she expects out of them in their reading logs. Reading logs are written to show what books you've read and what books you liked. You can make any category you like so you can keep track of your reading. With Franki modeling how to do her reading log, the students were encouraged to do the same and they had a good understanding of how to do it. I haven't had the opportunity to experience this myself in a classroom, but when given the chance I will stay involved all year long in the students reading, encourage students to read poetry by using poetry cards and I will lead by example by showing students my work and my writing log.